

11 May 2017

Dear FCC,

Keep net neutrality.

Getting rid of network neutrality would be OK if there was choice and competition among internet service providers. As it is, exclusive agreements between government and industry have made it nearly impossible to get into the market. Google stopped trying to bring Google Fiber to new cities because government made it so difficult, and many municipal ISPs have been shut down too across the country. Until that problem is fixed, taking away net neutrality will only embolden your one choice for cable internet provider to block or throttle your access to competitors' content or just content that they don't like.

I'd also like to add that even under the Obama administration, the FCC allowed Comcast to block customers from hosting their own e-mail servers on the Comcast network. This personally caused me a great deal of headache while trying to develop and debug a website's "forgot your password" feature on a local server. Comcast's website says that they block e-mail servers for "security", but Comcast does let your e-mail through—if you pay extra for a "business account". In reality, there is no security problem because spam and viruses are effectively filtered by traffic monitoring, penetration testing, and real-time blacklists. Charging users like me extra for what is fundamentally the same service—sending data through a wire—raises barriers to market entry and stifles competition. This is exactly the kind of extortion that did not exist on the early internet and that network neutrality was supposed to prevent. Of course, if I could I would just switch to a different internet provider, but in most of Utah the only alternative to Comcast is the much slower CenturyLink DSL.

TLDR: The Obama-era net neutrality regulations did not go far enough. Don't take a step backwards.

Sincerely,

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